

Report to Cabinet



Date of Meeting	29 th October 2019
Portfolio	Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Finance
Report Author	Julie Murphy (For Children's & Neighbourhoods Directorates)
Public/Private Document	Public

Discretionary Fees & Charges

Executive Summary

1. During the years of austerity there have been significant increases to the level of Fees and Charges, which have resulted in pressures across some income budgets. It was decided that the budget assumptions, agreed by Cabinet on 30th July 2019, would recommended a nil increase for 2020/21.

Services were requested to review the level of their charges to identify any opportunities to increase charges above nil inflation, in order to contribute towards bridging the budget gap.

This report provides Cabinet Members with the proposed fees and charges by service for 2020/21, and details of any fees and charges above the 0% general uplift.

Recommendation

- 2.1 Cabinet consider the proposals in this report and, confirm or otherwise, to progress with the proposed discretionary fees and charges for consultation.
- 2.2 Cabinet consider the fees and charges in relation to the supply of waste bins be implemented from February 2020.

Reason for Recommendation

3. The fees and charges in this report have been proposed by each Directorate, taking into account the 0% general uplift in Discretionary Fees and Charges agreed at Cabinet on 30th July. Any uplifts that are not in line with the 0% proposal, are highlighted in section 5.3.

Key Points for Consideration

- 4.1 The Authority carries out an annual review of discretionary fees and charges as part of the budget setting process. It is a requirement of this process that Elected Members agree an appropriate general level of increase. For the 2020/21 financial year, Cabinet on 30th July approved a 0% increase.
- 4.2 The proposed fee levels for the 2020/21 financial year are included in Appendix 1. Increases above the agreed 0% uplift are detailed in section 5.3.

4.3 Alternatives Considered

The alternative is not to review or increase our fees and charges. This would potentially reduce the income available to the Council and make it more difficult to achieve a balanced budget.

Costs and Budget Summary

- 5.1 A full list of all proposed fees and charges for 2020/21 are included in appendix 1. Increases above the agreed 0% uplift are highlighted below.
- 5.2 The proposal to introduce charges for replacement bins will increase income in 2019/20 by approximately £30k with the full year forecast of £189k in 2020/21.
- 5.3 All other increases in charges are not expected to deliver additional income, but to ensure that the budgeted level of income is achieved.
- 5.4 Uplifts above the 0% increase are listed below.

Libraries

- Play sets / Music sets these are increasingly difficult to source making them more expensive
- Microfilm prints costs of prints has risen as part of maintenance contracts.
- Replacement membership cards (adults). The service has found an increase in the number of cards being lost and the admin surrounding a lost card is quite significant.
- Lost or damaged books. The service hasn't increased the charge in a number of years and the increase reflect this.

Public Protection

- Animal licensing fees.

Adult Care

- Appointeeship fee to introduce a tiered charge

- Deferred payments admin fee scheme. The scheme should be self-financing
- Transport (per journey). Very little income as low usage.

Planning and Estates

- All charges have been increased but the service does not believe that this will affect the use of the services.

Neighbourhoods

- Charges for replacement bins

Risk and Policy Implications

6. The Service has reviewed its charges against relevant legislation to ensure that all transactions remain compliant with the relevant statutes governing Local Authority activities.

Consultation

7. All services engage with the production of the proposed charges identified within this report. The Leadership Team, Cabinet Member for Finance, and opposition Portfolio holder for Finance have been informed of the proposed charges for 2020/21. The report will be presented to the Corporate Overview and Scrutiny on 28 October 2019.

Background Papers	Place of Inspection
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| 8. Background papers to this report can be obtained from Stuart Smith | Number 1 Riverside Floor 2 |
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For Further Information Contact:	Julie Murphy Julie.murphy@rochdale.gov.uk
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